

21 March 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Attendees of DCI/NFAC Meeting

FROM : Presidential Briefing Coordinator

25X1 SUBJECT : Rhodesia [ ]

1. The attached is a background paper for tomorrow's DCI/NFAC meeting which will be held at 1300-1400, Thursday, 22 March, in the D/NFAC Conference Room 7E32 (vice the DCI Conference Room). [ ] 25X1

2. Because space is limited in the D/NFAC Conference Room we probably cannot find room for more than one representative of each organization. To ensure that we don't overload the conference room please ensure that [ ] knows 25X1A  
25X1 who will attend. [ ]

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Attachment

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20 March 1979

D R A F T

RHODESIA

- I. The Rhodesian government is making an all-out effort to ensure adequate security and a good turnout for the April election.
  - A. All military and police leaves have been cancelled during the election period and all civilian reservists have been called up, giving the Rhodesians a           manpower pool totaling some 72,000. (see annex)
  - B. These forces will be assisted by about 9,000 ex-guerrillas and other African auxiliaries loyal to black coleaders Muzorewa and Sithole.
  - C. Voting will take place over a five-day period beginning 17 April. Security forces will move from one polling area to another on successive days to provide maximum security.

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II. ZANU and ZAPU are publicly committed to disrupting the election, but it is unlikely they can prevent the poll from taking place.

A. ZANU and ZAPU now have about 10,000 guerrillas operating inside Rhodesia; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

B. Both groups plan to intimidate voters, attack electoral officials and polling stations, and possibly stage incidents near the polling stations to distract the security forces.

C. Neither group appears capable of launching a coordinated conventional offensive for the election, but attacks on "soft" targets of major psychological and economic importance are certain to increase.

III. The Rhodesians hope for at least a 60 percent turnout, but will maintain that the election is valid if only 20 percent of the blacks vote.

A. Bishop Muzorewa should win more than half of the 72 black seats in the 100 seat parliament. His closest rival, Rev. Sithole, has lost some ground in recent months and probably will win less than a third of the black seats. Chief Chirau, the other black coleader in the transitional government, lacks popular support and will pick up a couple seats at best. Chief Ndiweni, who broke from Chirau's party last November, may also win one or two seats.

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- B. Prime Minister Smith's Rhodesian Front Party--with Smith as its leading candidate--is assured of winning the 28 seats reserved for whites. The small, white right-wing parties disbanded after the constitutional referendum last January and the small, liberal party is boycotting the election.
  - C. Most whites have adopted a "let's-give-it-a-try" attitude toward the election. White emigration has stabilized at about 1,000 per month, but it could accelerate significantly after the election if it appeared that the new government was making no progress toward negotiating an end to the war.
  - D. ZANU and ZAPU probably will be invited to participate in the election, but will refuse.
- IV. The election will not bring an end to the war, nor will the new government win widespread recognition. Present leaders hope, however, that a black-led government will attract large numbers of defectors from the guerrillas. Smith believes he can barter his eventual resignation for ~~Western~~ western recognition and the lifting of sanctions.
- A. The period between the election and the formation of a new government will be crucial. The current timetable<sup>calls</sup> for a new government to be installed in May, but its composition will be the result of negotiations between the internal black leaders and the whites.

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- B. A number of present white cabinet officials who are unacceptable to the blacks will return to government and will expect to assume cabinet posts.
- V. Muzorewa is the most likely person to head up the new government.



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- A. Muzorewa has already entered into negotiations with white leaders focusing on a gradual merging of their parties and possible modification of those clauses in the constitution most abhorrent to blacks. He is considering offering the whites five cabinet posts including the ministries of finance, foreign, and internal affairs.
- B. Muzorewa also has been trying for months to meet with ZANU leader Mugabe to discuss a possible alliance between the two groups. ZANU so far has rejected all his approaches.
- V. Mugabe seems far more willing than ZAPU leader Nkomo to resolve the Rhodesian situation militarily, mainly because ZANU has four times as many guerrillas inside the country and can count on the support of most Shonas, who make up about 75 percent of the black population.
- A. Although Nkomo's relations with Muzorewa are strained, he might still try to work out a deal with the new black government, as few other options are available to him.

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- B. White Rhodesians, particularly in the military, would prefer an alliance with Nkomo rather than Mugabe whom they consider more radical.
- VI. The guerrilla war is placing increasing strains on the frontline states. While the frontline presidents would prefer a political solution in Rhodesia, they believe there is little chance of getting all parties to the negotiating table. They probably hope that the new government--however imperfect it will be in their eyes--will open new opportunities for a final settlement.

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Approved For Release 2004/01/20 : CIA-RDP81B00401R002500060011-0

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